

CBS EVENING NEWS
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LEBANON/
CIVIL CONFLICT

RATHER: Two nights ago, CBS News Pentagon correspondent David Martin reported that two unidentified but presumably Soviet submarines had been shadowing the U.S. warships off Beirut. Tonight, Martin reports that yet another danger may be lurking in these same waters.

MARTIN: Informed sources tell CBS News a new potential threat to American servicemen in and around Lebanon has silently appeared in the waters of the eastern Mediterranean. It is a Libyan, diesel-powered submarine capable of carrying 22 torpedoes. Intelligence analysts are concerned by the submarine's movement, since Libyan submarines normally do not operate so far from home. Late last month, sources say, the Soviet-built submarine left its base at Tubruq and transited to the Syrian port of Latakia, where it spent two days before getting under way again. Sources say it is now operating in waters north of Cyprus. Some analysts believe the stop in Latakia was intended as a show of solidarity for Syria in its present confrontation with the U.S. High Syrian officials have publicly threatened to launch kamikaze attacks against American ships operating off the coast of Lebanon. And on intelligence report says the Libyan submarine could be used against the U.S.

So far, sources say, the submarine has skirted the American fleet. David Martin, CBS News, the Pentagon.